

C H U R C H N E W S

FROM THE NORTHERN COUNTRIES

Edited by the Northern Ecumenical Institute

Sigtuna, Sweden

Director: Dr. Harry Johansson, Sigtuna, Sweden

Editor: Rev. Johs. Langhoff, Øster Egesborg per Mern, Denmark

No. 9

September 7th, 1955.

Northern Christian Temperance Conference in Finland.

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After the last World War co-operation between the theological faculties in the Northern countries has been strengthened. This is evident from the conferences for the teachers of the Northern theological faculties which are now being held regularly. This year the theological professors have met in Helsinki (Helsingfors) and Turku (Åbo) in Finland from August 25-28th. The theological faculties of these two cities have been the hosts for the conference, at which subjects from the various theological disciplines as well as practical problems connected with the instruction were discussed.

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The Northern Lutheran Bishops assembled in Norway.

Every third year the bishops in the National Lutheran Churches of the Northern countries assemble for joint discussions. This year the meeting was held at Lier near Oslo from August 24th - 29th. Like previous meetings of the Northern bishops the meeting was of a confidential nature so that its agenda is not known.

Scandinavia's Methodist Bishop Visits Africa.

The Bishop of all the Northern Methodist Churches, Bishop Odd Hagen, recently left on a 3 months' inspection tour of the mission fields in South Africa, Angola, Mozambique, Southern Rhodesia, and Belgian Congo. The Bishop was appointed by the International Methodist Council of Bishops to visit these districts. By plane and car he is visiting over 50 mission stations and presides at 3 annual conferences. He will of course be especially interested in contacting the Northern missionaries in the area.

Ecumenical Work Camps in Northern Countries.

It is a well-known fact that the ecumenical work camps arranged by the Youth Department of the World Council of Churches have been a great success in the last few years. This summer, camps of this kind have been held in Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden, and everywhere the camps have been a great success.

In Denmark 22 young people from every corner of the earth and from many denominations have levelled off a sports ground and laid 2 kilometers of water pipes for Stig Guldberg's world famous school for invalid children at Nysted, Lolland.

In Finland a group of 20 young people have been rebuilding Aspö Chapel which was ruined in a storm.

In Norway the ecumenical work camp was to have assisted in the erection of a church in Tempe and Valene, but unfortunately the necessary building permit could not be obtained. As a consequence of this the number of participants had to be reduced from 25 to 10 and they had to confine themselves to levelling off the ground and other preliminary work on the plot where the church is to stand.

In Sweden experiments were made with an entirely new type of work camp at Hallstahammar. The 10 men who took part worked in factories, and the 10 women looked after children in the homes of workers where both husband and wife have to work out all day. It is hoped in this way to promote a valuable contact between the Church and the workers and to give the participants first-hand knowledge of the problems of workers and industrial towns.

DENMARK

The Church's Commitment in the Conflict Between West and East.

The Secretary General for the YMCA and YWCA in Denmark, Rev. Orla Møller, who caused a good deal of discussion by publicly recommending Danish young people to take part in the festival held by the World Federation of Democratic Youth in Warsaw (CN No. 3), has put forth his basic views in the Northern ecumenical magazine "Kristen

Gemenskap" ("Christian Fellowship") in an article entitled "The Commitment of the Church in the Conflict between East and West". In this article he maintains that the Christian church must never become a weapon in the hands of the State, nor must it identify itself with specific political views or forms of government.

Rev. Orla Møller feels that Christians in the East and the West have been far too apt to identify Christianity with their own social pattern, whereas they ought to have recognized it as their duty to point out the lack of Christian inspiration in the political systems of both East and West. "The Church must be independent of political forces and solely rest on faith in Christ", Orla Møller writes.

He continues: "In this faith the Church must strive to maintain a Christian conception of right in the present conflict, even though this may not coincide with ordinary political views. It is easier for us to do this in the West because we have full freedom of speech, but for this very reason it is incomprehensible that the Western churches do not to a far greater extent make use of all the possibilities of getting in touch with groups behind the Iron Curtain. Does the Church no longer believe in the power of the Word? Does it believe that isolation is a stronger weapon? Or in other words: can we simply write off the churches behind the Iron and Bamboo Curtains feeling that they have failed? Can we dismiss them from our thoughts merely by saying that "they have deserted to the enemy"? In my opinion far too few church people in the West have asked these questions, perhaps in some cases because it would be unpleasant to have to answer. But it is not only the naive who ask them, for the Christian Gospel demands unfailing love and self-denial of us. And even then there remains the question whether there is any more direct way of combatting godlessness than by strengthening the existing churches in the Communist countries.

Towards the conclusion of his article Rev. Orla Møller writes:

-In our relationship to the East it cannot be right merely to condemn and isolate; an effort must be made to attain to new and more correct views by means of discussion. It is a matter of course that the Church must speak out against violations of justice in the East, and that in any discussion it must give prominence to its views but in order to be able to do so with truth and authority it must also oppose all tendencies to limit freedom in the Western democracies. It is not sufficient merely to oppose a system that is alien to Western thought and in several cases directly opposed to it; it is far more essential to be constructively concerned with interpreting the full rights and liberties of the individual everywhere in the East as well as in the West. Here is a field where the Church must do its part towards "creating a social conscience"; if the Church does not remind the West of its commitment to political, social, and economic reform, it has no contribution to offer towards the challenge of the East. -

German Rector in Northern Slesvig on the Situation of the Church in the Border Country.

Since 1920 when the former German province of Northern Slesvig was returned to Denmark after a plebiscite, four German clergymen have been employed by the Danish Lutheran National Church to serve the German population in the towns, whereas the Germans in the rural

districts have organized themselves in "free congregations".

Recently one of the German pastors serving in the Danish National Church, Rev. Carl Jørgensen, Sønderborg, retired on account of age, and an interview with him in the "Kristeligt Dagblad" ("Christian Daily"), Copenhagen, attracted a good deal of attention in Danish and German circles, as he expressed his satisfaction with the church conditions provided for the German minority in Northern Slesvig and his wish that the Danes in German South Schleswig might be given equal freedom. Rev. Carl Jørgensen said:

- I am grateful for the good conditions I have enjoyed as a German clergyman in the Danish church. I have had much freedom and in every way excellent conditions. As far as I know the German congregations have no unfulfilled desires, and I could wish that the Danish church in South Schleswig had as free hands as the German congregations North of the border. Ecclesiastical and spiritual problems should be solved in freedom. -

Some time ago Rev. Carl Jørgensen voted against the rest of the German group in the parochial church council when it voted for maintaining the appointment as German rector in the town. Pastor Jørgensen felt that it was more reasonable that the German pastor in Sønderborg should be a curate, as the Danish clergyman had more church ceremonies to perform than his German colleague. But the Danish Minister of Church Affairs decided that the present arrangement with a German rector in Sønderborg is to be maintained.

Denmark's First "Block Clergyman" Appointed.

The Lutheran National Church of Denmark has got its first "block clergyman". In Aalborg a pastor has been charged with the care of 3,000 people living in a block of flats recently developed by a large building society. In this housing development there is a recreation centre, and it is proposed to build a church in connection with it. The idea was inspired by Bishop Erik Jensen of Aalborg Diocese, who for many years was secretary-general of Copenhagen's Church Fund. Here he realized the latent need among the spiritually rootless population of large new housing developments for contact with the church. It is almost impossible to establish contact of this nature in the large city parishes, whereas a block-pastor besides looking after his regular church work is supposed to take part in the work of the tenants' association and be in touch with other problems common to the whole block of flats and hence finds it far easier to get into contact with his parish.

In Copenhagen, too, there are plans of appointing "block-pastors" in the large suburbs, but Aalborg was the first to realize the idea.

40 Americans to Study Folk High Schools in Denmark.

The Folk High Schools which, as we all know, originated in Denmark, each year attract a number of foreigners who come to study their history as well as their work to-day.

In the last month a group of 40 young Americans, mostly school teachers, arrived in Denmark to study Folk High Schools. They are to spend the first few months in Danish homes in order to learn the language sufficiently to profit from a visit to various Danish Folk High Schools where they are to take part in a 5 months' course.

The visit has been planned by an American committee under the presidency of Dr. Burdell, a well-known name in popular education in U.S.A., and a similar committee in Denmark in which there are a number of prominent Folk High School leaders.

Kierkegaard Congress to Celebrate 100th Anniversary of His Death.

Students of Kierkegaard from all over the world have been gathered in Copenhagen in the week August 10th - 17th for a congress arranged by the Danish Søren Kierkegaard Society. Invitations were only sent out to a limited number of theologians and philosophers throughout the world who were known to be interested in a congress of this kind, and even though the number of participants was not very great - there were about 50-60 Kierkegaard students present - it is presumably safe to say that never before have so many of the most prominent students of Kierkegaard been gathered in one spot.

The participants were welcomed in the University Annex where Kierkegaard once went to school by the president and vice-president of the Kierkegaard Society, Professors Dr. N.H. Sørensen and Dr. Billeskov Jansen, and in the following week Kierkegaard's thought was illuminated in a number of brilliant and scholarly lectures followed by discussions. The special problems connected with Kierkegaard-research were also discussed.

"Ecumenical Day" - an Annual Event.

In the new regulations of the Danish Ecumenical Council it has been laid down that an "Ecumenical Day" is to be held every year on which members of the various denominations affiliated with ecumenical work are to have the opportunity of getting to know each other and discussing differences and joint problems.

According to the new regulations the first Ecumenical Day is to be held in Aarhus on September 17th - 18th. Its main theme is to be "The Authority of the Bible", a subject that is to be dealt with by lectures from the National Lutheran Church as well as from the Free Churches. The situation of ecumenical work to-day will also be taken up in a round-table discussion between representatives for the nine affiliated denominations. The last evening there is to be a function arranged by The Ecumenical Youth Committee in Aarhus. On Sunday there is to be a joint communion service in the Methodist Church in Aarhus for all who will and can take part.

FINLAND

The Christian Church and The World Peace Conference.

In a leading article the Swedish Church weekly in Finland "För-samlingsbladet" discusses the peace movement headed by the World Council for Peace and concludes that the Church cannot support this movement, but must continue to work for peace on its own.

The reason for this reconsideration of the problem is the big peace conference in Helsinki (Helsingfors). This conference issued an appeal to all men of good-will to join the movement, and it was made to appear that those who held aloof or criticized the peace conference were opponents of peace.

The paper goes on to say that on this background it is not enough to pass over the conference in silence or to attack its resolutions as a whole. Peace is a goal for which the Church is striving and praying, whereas from a Christian point of view war must always be characterized as an evil thing opposing the will of God. To be sure, there have been situations in which war must be recognized as a means of avoiding still greater evils, as a means of defence for liberty, truth, and justice. But it is a question whether we have not reached a point where war has become so dreadful, that it must be avoided even though certain human values should be forfeited for a time. At any rate this question demands serious consideration.

Christian work for peace cannot confine itself to defending the attitude of any constellation of great powers to world problems, and in spite of much idealism and honest desire for peace in the hearts of the participants in the Congress for Peace, it is impossible to help feeling that the Congress was far too one-sided in endorsing the opinion of one constellation of powers, while it was taken for granted that the West was opposed to peace. The Congress also succumbed to the temptation of recommending apparently simple and attractive solutions to the problems of the West without considering the possibility of bringing them to execution, and without recognizing the possible justifiability of the opponent's attitude.

Esthonia's Lutheran Archbishop Tells of the Church in his Country.

The Archbishop of Tallinn (Revel), Jaan Kiivit, who took part in the Congress for peace in Helsinki (Helsingfors) was interviewed there by the Finno-Swedish church paper "Församlingsbladet" regarding church conditions in Esthonia. He stated that 70 o/o of the Esthonian people still belong to the Church and that no hindrance are put in the way either of those who wish to join the Church or of those who wish to leave it. Church dues are paid on a voluntary basis, but if a member of the Church has not paid his dues for three years he is struck off the membership roll. As in other parts of the Soviet Union the church buildings belong to the State, but are placed at the disposal of the congregations without cost. The number of congregations to-day is larger than before the War, as a number of chapels have been turned into independent churches.

In 1949 a new constitution of the church was introduced, which made it possible to elect new leaders in place of those the Church had lost in the War. The Consistory receives 15 o/o of the income of all the congregations and is thus able to support financially weak congregations.

After the dissolution of the theological faculty in Tartu (Dorpat) a theological examination board directs the training for the ministry and has for this purpose taken over the theological literature from the University of Tartu (Dorpat). In order to relieve the lack of clergymen students who have completed about half their training can be ordained, though they cannot obtain regular appointment till all the required examinations have been passed.

Archbishop Kiivit also preached in the Storkyrkan during his stay in Helsinki (Helsingfors).

Lutheran and Orthodox Students Meet.

A year ago an ecumenical meeting for Lutheran and Orthodox students at Teiniharju, the summer camp of the Student Christian Council, was held. It was arranged by a joint committee of the Student Christian Movement and the Orthodox Student Council. Early in July this year a similar meeting was held on Greek Orthodox soil, in the Konevitsa monastery at Keitele. Bishop Eino Sormunen, Kuopio, and the Orthodox professor Leon Zander from Paris lectured on "The Holy". In an interview Professor Zander remarked that he hoped for great things from Finland in ecumenical matters. For in Finland life is still based on living pietism and classic Lutheranism, but at the same time Finland is the only place in the West outside Greece where a group of the Population is really Orthodox.

Finnish Pastoral Letter Regarding the Keeping of the Sunday.

From all the pulpits of the Finnish Lutheran churches a pastoral letter from the Finnish bishops was read on Midsummer's Day regarding the keeping of the Sunday. The letter deplores the fact that a diminished respect for holy days has been noticeable in the years after the War, so that the result is that many people look upon them as ordinary work-days. In an effort to combat this the letter maintains that in the restlessness and noise of our industrialized world it is important that the Sunday be used for that for which it was ordained, i.e. rest and quiet, thanksgiving and listening to the Word of God. In this way, the letter claims, the Sunday will be a gift, a source of joy and refreshment.

Finnish Colour Film from the Holy Land.

The film director Viljo Lampela, his wife the film actress Kaija Lampela, Pastor Ilmo Launis, the producer Eero Julin and Mrs. Anja Julin have taken a full-length colour film in Israel, combining the problems of the Arab countries and modern Israel with the relevation in Christ. The first showing of the new film to be given this autumn is eagerly awaited. Pastor Ilmo Launis who acts in the film has made seven trips to the East.

ICELAND

Pastoral Letter from Iceland's New Bishop.

Like his predecessors Iceland's new bishop Dr. 'Asmundur Gudmundsson has issued a pastoral letter to the clergy after his appointment. The pastoral letter which takes the form of a beautiful volume of 60 pages, is a statement of the Bishop's views on the duties of the National Church to-day.

The Bishop speaks of theology as a sacred science. Christ, the Light of the World, will lead the honest seeker to the truth. As the goal for the work of the Icelandic pastors he places the motto: Iceland - God's Kingdom, and the people of Iceland - God's people. He emphasizes the importance of co-operation between church, school, and home and the fact that the happiness of the country - as well as of the world - is dependent on maintaining Christian faith and morals.

Bishop 'Asmundur Gudmundsson goes on to enumerate the various forms of Christian work which should be comprehended in the activities of the clergy. At the heart of it all should stand the resurrection of Christ. He is living and present, and His spirit should be in us.

NORWAY

The Duke of Edinburgh and Mr. Macmillan Read the Lessons for the Day.

During Queen Elizabeth's recent visit in Norway the Queen and her escort took part in the Sunday services in the little English church in Oslo, St. Edmund's Church. The Bishop of Fulham preached. Thousands of people who were unable to get seats inside the church followed the service through loudspeakers. The lessons for the day were read by the Duke of Edinburgh and the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Macmillan.

Defence of the Voluntary Church Organizations.

The Norwegian Lutheran Mission League, one of the large voluntary church organizations in Norway which carries on both foreign and home missions, passed a resolution at its annual meeting this summer warning against a tendency that has been noticeable in the last few years towards concentrating all Christian work around the Church and the clerical office.

"The Mission League thinks it a serious development if work done by laymen is to be directed by the clergy and the parochial councils", says the resolution. "We must maintain our right and duty to use spiritual gifts without having them controlled by Church organizations. This is part of our view on laymen."

In a leading article the Christian daily in Oslo "Vårt Land" has also opposed the wish expressed in several church papers, namely that the voluntary Christian organizations which rest on the same foundation as the National Lutheran Church should be more or less integrated into the Church. "Vårt Land" stresses the value of these organizations having found a place for these gifts in their work, whereas the Church has not been able to do so. The writer does not feel that Church people in general regard the living church as being identical with the Norwegian State Church. On the other hand the paper advocates increased co-operation and mutual understanding between the Church and voluntary Christian organizations.

The Methodists Attack the Holding of Sports Events on Sundays.

At its annual conference at Flekkfjord the Norwegian Methodist Church unanimously adopted a resolution condemning the holding of sports events on Sundays. "Sunday is a holy day given to man for physical rest and spiritual growth", the resolution says, adding that members of the Methodist Church should on no account take part in sports events on Sundays either actively or as spectators.

In this connection the Christian daily "Dagen" in Bergen writes that the Methodist Church is scarcely likely to gain popularity with the masses by taking such an attitude, which can be regarded as a breach in the advances made between Church and sports which have resulted in special sports services. On the other hand it is a

question whether it is not the right attitude to take after all, the paper writes. It is the only consistent point of view if one is to demand respect for the Sunday.

Death of Christian S. Oftedal, the well-known Editor.

One of the best known laymen in the Norwegian Church Christian S. Oftedal of the Stavanger Evening Paper "Stavanger Aftenblad" has suddenly died at the age of 48. Mr. Oftedal was arrested by the Gestapo in August 1940 for "illegal activities" and in 1941 he was condemned to death by a German tribunal, but the sentence was altered to 10 years penal servitude. Until April 1945 he was detained in various German penal camps. After the War he was elected to Parliament (Stortinget) as a representative of the Liberal Party (Venstre), and since 1952 he has been vice-Chairman of this party. From 1952-54 he was a member of the Norwegian UN-delegation. In church circles as well as among politicians and journalists he was highly respected and a number of books from the years after the War have made his name familiar in wide circles. A great number of people were assembled at the funeral service in Stavanger Cathedral at which Oftedal's good friend, Bishop Eivind Berggrav, spoke.

Plans for a Norwegian "Sigtuna Foundation".

The Sigtuna Foundation (Sigtuna-Stiftelsen) in Sweden, established as a contact centre and meeting place for cultural and church circles, has been a source of inspiration for a similar initiative in many other countries. Norway has so far had no such centre, but now Dean Sigurd Fjær, Trondheim, has proposed the establishment of an institution of this kind to be called the Olav Foundation after Norway's patron saint, St. Olav. It is proposed that the Olav Foundation be established in Trondheim with the purpose of promoting unity in spiritual affairs and strengthening the bonds between Christian and cultural life, so that the holy may again become the natural basis of all cultural life. At the same time the Foundation is to serve as a centre for those wishing to study old Norwegian art, church singing and church music, and the Dean further suggests that a folk high school for city youth be attached to the Foundation.

New Bill Regarding Conscientious Objectors.

The committee working on the revisal of the legislation regarding conscientious objectors has now made its report. It suggests that these men should be allowed to serve without bearing arms in certain capacities in the armed forces, and that the period of service for those who are transferred to civil duty unrelated to defence should exceed the normal military service by 33 o/o as against 30 o/o at present.

The committee further suggests that the possibility of being exempted from armed military service by application be preserved for those who would otherwise violate their religious or moral convictions, whereas other reasons, e.g. political, should not give access to the right of exemption.

News Flashes.

100 students from Norges Kristelige Studentlag, the Pietist Student Movement, have spent a fortnight this summer in the mountains at Sunnmøre carrying a new electric cable over the mountain side for a local power station. Their total earnings go to the work of their organization.

20 young YMCA leaders from Oslo invited 70 boys from Western Berlin refugee barracks to spend a fortnight this summer in a camp on the island of Scharfenberg in the French sector, and 12 Norwegian girl guides of the YWCA organization have arranged a similar summer camp for 30 German refugee girls. In addition, 40 young men and women went to Paris in order to complete the fitting up of Bishop Berggrav's boys' home there, and 30 young people from the Santhalistan Mission have been working in Paris repairing the little Lutheran church Bon Secour.

The Norwegian missionary, Miss Laura Strand, who has spent 46 years in Swaziland has received the Africa Medal in recognition of her great services. The medal was awarded on Queen Elisabeth's birthday. Some years ago Miss Laura Strand received the Norwegian King's Order of Merit in silver.

Last year the Salvation Army spent 6 million crowns for social work. This was made known at the Army Congress in Oslo recently.

SWEDEN

Mrs. Anna Söderblom deceased.

Mrs. Anna Söderblom died in Uppsala on August 16th at the age of nearly 85. She was the widow of Archbishop Nathan Söderblom, well-known as one of the initiators and leaders of the ecumenical movement. Mrs. Söderblom took a very active part in the work of her husband. After his death in 1931 she organized his archive and library which is now an institution of great value for research on the Church history of this century.

Social Democracy and Christianity.

The Swedish Social Democrat paper "Nyhetera" in Hålsingborg has openly repudiated the picture of the Social Democratic attitude to the church as it was recently described by the author Mr. Eskil Bergen (CN No. 8). The paper writes:

- In the Social Democrat Labour Movement no effort is made to influence people towards atheism. This should be stated as emphatically as possible. On the contrary we maintain that a man's religion is his private affair. If this attitude did not exist the "Brotherhood Movement" (Broderskapsrörelsen), i.e. the Christian Social Democrats would not have existed as a recognized and valued part of the Labour Movement.

In their original programme the Swedish Social Democrats demanded the separation of Church and State, the paper continues, but that has nothing to do with atheism. There is no desire of overthrowing the Church, as a number of pastors who have expressed their opinions on political matters seem to think. The Swedish Labour Movement wishes complete religious liberty, but this is not due to atheism. The reason for this attitude is merely the feeling that in such important questions as a man's view of life everyone must be free to choose the path he feels to be the right one after mature consideration. We can only deplore that everyone has not made equal progress in their support of the liberties expressed in the UN-Charter.

From Local Congregation to Church.

A significant movement is undoubtedly taking place in these years in the large Free Church Organization "The Mission Covenant Church of Sweden" (Svenska Missionsförbundet) tending towards the laying of greater stress on a comprehensive church view. This tendency asserted itself at the annual conference of the National League of Preachers, where especially the younger pastors supported a clearer view of the Mission Covenant as a church with the practical consequences this entails. One of these practical consequences has already been realized through the new arrangement by which the Covenant makes itself responsible for the salaries of all clergymen by guaranteeing a certain minimum salary.

The Free Church daily "Svenska Morgonbladet" discussed the question in a leading article conceding that the local congregation is the primary entity constituting the church, but the claims of practical life and the spiritual nature of the fellowship demand that the total reality of fellowship must have authority and the ability to work whether it be called "church" or "covenant".

The weekly "Vår Kyrka" published by the National Lutheran Church characterizes the development as a new departure in Free Church circles of fundamental value.

The Pentecostal Movement's Broadcasting Station in Tangier Opens.

After seven years' perseverance and hard work the Swedish Pentecostal Movement under the leadership of Pastor Lewi Pethrus has succeeded in beginning transmissions from the free broadcasting station in Tangier (see CN No. 1 and 3). The first transmission could be heard on July 29th on a wave length in the 19 meter band and one in the 25 meter band, and at present the station broadcasts nearly every day from 17:45 to 23:00.

Pastor Pethrus who flew to Tangier to take part in the inauguration of the new station said in his speech on this occasion:

- It would be most remiss of us Christians if we did not utilize the tremendous possibilities of the wireless to spread our message to millions of people. Until now we have been content to make the best use of the ordinary wireless programmes, but it would be inexcusable to continue to stand with folded arms in view of the great spiritual distress and anti-Christian activity.

A number of papers abroad and at home characterize the event as a victory for Pastor Lewi Pethrus, who received repeated refusals to his applications to the currency office for permission to export the money collected in Sweden for this purpose. Now members of the Pentecostal Movement abroad, chiefly in U.S.A., have promised to support the plan financially, thus ensuring its being carried out. An international broadcasting association IBRA has been started with membership dues ranging from 22:50 to 500:- Swedish crowns, and in this way it has been possible to transfer some of the currency. The annual cost of running the station is estimated at 1 million crowns, besides the expenses connected with the studio etc. in Stockholm.

For the time being the programmes are broadcast in Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, German, English, French, and Dutch, but it is intended to broadcast in Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese, and Italian later on as well. The programmes will primarily consist of preaching,

singing, and music, but there are also plans of giving news bulletins and lectures on practical and cultural subjects, and the idea of commercial programmes is being considered. However, it is not only the Pentecostal Movement that will use the microphone; the very first Sunday Dean Olle Nystedt from the National Lutheran Church spoke on the Swedish Bible Society.

The IBRA Broadcasting Station (the official name of the Tangier station) is a protest against the small space given to religious programmes on the Swedish wireless (about 5 o/o of the programmes), and against the way in which the Pentecostal Movement feels itself to have been pushed aside with only 3 - 4 programmes a year in spite of the fact that it has 100.000 members. Pastor Pethrus made no attempt to conceal this when he was interviewed at a press conference before leaving for Tangier.

International Conference of Theologians at Västerås.

In the week September 1st - 6th Västerås Theological Society has held an international conference for theologians at Rättvik in co-operation with the theological department of the Lutheran World Federation. The main subject discussed at the conference was "The Confession and Message of the Church". A number of well-known theologians spoke on various aspects of this subject, and a good deal of emphasis was placed on the discussions afterwards.

1.000 Pastors to Take Part in Social Studies.

The Diakonistyrelse of the Swedish Church, which is the Home Mission Board of the Swedish National Church, has planned a comprehensive attempt to create contact and understanding between the Church and the working classes. The plans stretch over a period of five years and begin with special studies for the pastors, including such subjects as social ethics, the study of trade unions, the history of socialism, the problems of the labour market, etc. No less than 1.000 pastors have already signed up for this course. The next step will be the study of theological and sociological aspects of man and human labour.

Prominent persons in the church and the Labour Movement will lead the studies. As an offshoot of this work it is hoped that it will be possible in the course of the next few years to have factory chaplains attached to large industrial concerns all over the country.

Courses in Liturgy and Dramatics.

The Swedish author and director of the Sigtuna Foundation, Pastor Olov Hartman, had arranged a probably unique course at Sigtuna in late August - offering instruction in liturgy and dramatics for leaders of the church's work among young people. The object of the course was through joint effort to determine certain lines for dramatic activity in the church and for distinguishing in theory as well as in practice between the church drama and secular theatre. One point of departure for the discussions was Rev. Hartman's attempts at Sigtuna to remodel the church drama on a liturgical basis. Speakers were Olov Hartman, the stage manager Tuve Nyström, and the dramatist Tore Zetterholm.

News Flashes.

The Christian Association of Salesmen in Sweden has now placed 18,102 bibles in 825 hotels all over the country. The Association has also begun to distribute testaments in the hospitals.

The Indian Government has now for the second time rejected an application for an entry permit for missionary Svea Sveland of the Örebro Mission.

The City Mission in Stockholm is planning to open the first Swedish youth school for 15 - 18 year olds with both practical and theoretical subjects. The school is modelled on similar Danish and Norwegian institutions and is to give a general education, but an a Christian foundation.

October 2nd, 1955.

Countries.

The Northern countries recently met in Copenhagen to discuss common problems. It was to some extent an historic meeting seeing that it is the first time since the Reformation that a meeting of the Catholic bishops in the Northern countries has taken place. Denmark got her first Catholic bishop in 1953, and later Norway, Sweden, and Finland followed.

In all there are 32,000 Catholics in the Northern countries, though 1/4 of this number were not born here, but have come as immigrants or refugees. Denmark has 27,000, Sweden 10,000, Norway 5,000, and Finland 2,000. Two thirds of Sweden's Catholics are aliens who came to Sweden during or after the last war. There have been relatively few conversions to Catholicism in the Northern countries.

Conference of the Northern Home Missions in Helsinki Next Year.

The Council of the Northern Home Missions, which recently convened in Stockholm to discuss a number of common problems, resolved to hold a conference of the Northern Home Missions in Helsinki (Helsingfors) in the autumn of 1956.

Summary

Plans for a World Council of Christian Temperance Societies.

At its general conference in Copenhagen the International Blue Cross (and associated temperance societies) decided to extend its contact with British and American Christian temperance societies and to work for the establishment of a world council of Christian temperance societies at the big day-at-night congress to be held in London next summer. This congress will be the greatest meeting yet for temperance problems, and sociologists, psychologists, doctors, and temperance societies of all kinds will be present.

